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ABSTRACT

This performance guide is designed for teachers to use with students before and after a performance of "Caddie Woodlawn," adapted by Greg Gunning from the novel by Carol Ryrie Brink. The guide, called a "Cuesheet," contains seven activity sheets for use in class, addressing: (1) The Characters (introducing the characters in the play and explaining some theatrical conventions such as narrators, scenes, and actors doubling parts); (2) The Story (offering a story synopsis and looking at where the story takes place on the map); (3) Westward Ho: The Setting (discussing pioneer life and the movement West, and how props and set pieces recreate this time); (4) Language on the Frontier (helping students understand language in the play that might be unfamiliar to them); (5) From Book to Play (looking at the challenges of adapting a book into a play that can be performed on a stage); (6) Carol Ryrie Brink and the "Real" Caddie (describing how the author wrote this book based on stories her grandmother told her about growing up on the Wisconsin frontier, and listing resources for further explanation); and (7) Going to the Kennedy Center (about the audience's role and the Kennedy Center itself). (SR)

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"Caddie Woodlawn": Adapted by Greg Gunning from the Novel by Carol Ryrie Brink. Cue Sheet for Students.

by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa

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Cue sheet

FOR STUDENTS

Welcome to *Cuesheet*, a performance guide published by the Education Department of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. This *Cuesheet* is designed to help you prepare for the performance of *Caddie Woodlawn*.

The wagon marks activities you may want to do with other students, friends, or family.

This Cuesheet contains:

The Characters, page 2
The Story, page 3
Westward Ho: The Setting, page 4
Language on the Frontier, page 5
From Book to Play, page 6
Carol Ryrie Brink and the "Real" Caddie, page 7
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The Kennedy Center

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The Characters

"Hi, I'm Caddie Woodlawn. When I get into trouble, my Ma calls me by my full name, Caroline Augusta Woodlawn. I'm the main **character** in this play. That means I'm in almost every **scene.** I'm also the play's narrator, which means I talk directly to you, the audience. I explain what's going on.

"There are many other characters in the play, too:

Mrs. Harriet Woodlawn, my mother, is very proper. She is originally from Boston.

Mr. John Woodlawn is my father. He left his wealthy family behind in England.

Tom Woodlawn is my brother. He likes adventure too.

Miss Parker is my school teacher.

Reverend Tanner is a **circuit rider** who visits our home.

Indian John, a wise Indian chief, is one of my best friends.

Obediah Jones, my classmate, is a bully. He isn't very smart and he doesn't like Indians.

Gus Hankinson, my classmate, is lonely and shy. Besides me, he doesn't have many friends because his father is white and his mother is Indian.

Mrs. Hankinson is Gus's mother. She is sent away from Dunnville because she is Indian."

character — a person, an animal, or sometimes an object in a play

scene — a part of a play

circuit rider — a pioneer preacher who visited many towns

During the performance

Doubling Up

Sometimes in plays, one actor plays many different characters. This is called "doubling." The play *Caddie Woodlawn* is performed by four actors. One young woman plays Caddie. Two men and one woman play the other nine parts. While you're watching the show, see if you can tell which actor appears as more than one character. How do they change their voices, movements, or costumes to become a different character?

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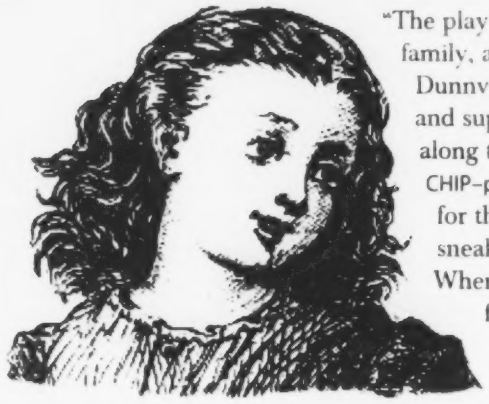
The Story



"The play you're gonna see is about me and my family, and what it is like growing up in Dunnville, Wisconsin, in 1864. We get news and supplies from a riverboat that travels along the Chippewa (pronounced CHIP-puh-wah) River. One day, after waiting for the boat, me and my brother Tom sneak off to visit my friend Indian John. When we get back home, Ma punishes me for going to the Indian camp by sending me to my room.

"At school, my teacher Miss Parker is always trying to keep peace between me and a bully named Obediah Jones. He's always picking on my friend Gus Hankinson 'cause Gus is part Indian. I help Gus stand up to the bully.

"Obediah starts a rumor that the Indians are gonna attack us **pioneers.** Later we find out that he lied.

pioneers — people who are the first to go to a new place

"Before the play ends, I have one more problem. My family has to decide if we want to leave America. If we move back to England, my dad will receive land and money.

"Will we stay or go?"

Wisconsin on the Map

On a map of the United States, find the state of Wisconsin. Now look at the northwest part of the state and find the Chippewa River. See if you can find where the Chippewa River connects with the Mississippi River. Caddie's teacher asks her class to name all the states through which the Mississippi River flows. Can you name them? There are ten.

ILLUSTRATIONS THROUGHOUT BY TRINA SCHART HYMAN FROM CADDIE WOODLAWN, SIMON & SCHUSTER BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS, ©1973

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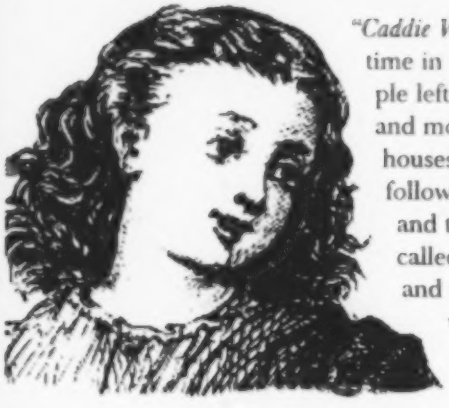
Westward Ho: The Setting



"*Caddie Woodlawn* takes place during a time in this country's history when people left the east coast of the United States and moved out west to get land, build houses and start families. The pioneers followed paths like the Santa Fe Trail and the Oregon Trail to new land, called frontier. They lived in log cabins and went hunting for food. Sometimes, war broke out between the Indians who already lived on the land and the pioneers."

After the performance

Pioneer Life

- Imagine what it would be like if you and your family had to pack up and move across the country in 1865?
- Discuss how pioneer life was shown in the play?
- What **props** and **set pieces** were used to recreate Dunnville, Wisconsin?

props — objects an actor uses in a play to help tell the story

set pieces — objects used in a play to help create different locations

Why Move West? LAND!

In 1850, the United States Congress gave free land to anyone willing to live on it for four years – as long as that person was a white man over the age of 18.

City Life Was Hard!

In the big cities on the East Coast – like Boston and New York – it was difficult to get a job and earn enough money to feed, clothe, and house a family. Everything was expensive.

Freedom!

Slavery wasn't allowed out west, so people who wanted to be free moved, too.

The United States in 1861

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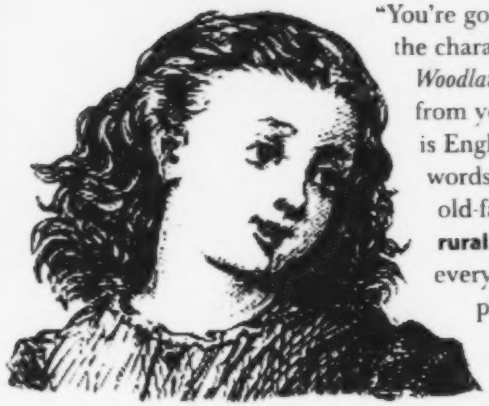
Language on the Frontier



"You're gonna notice that the characters in *Caddie Woodlawn* talk differently from you. Our language is English, but our words and accents are old-fashioned and **rural.** Some of our everyday words and phrases might sound funny and unfamiliar to you.

"We live near the Chippewa River, so we always see barges. Barge – a boat that's used mostly on rivers.

"The school bully Obediah Jones makes fun of my friend Gus by saying he's all 'gussied up' and by calling him a 'half-breed.'

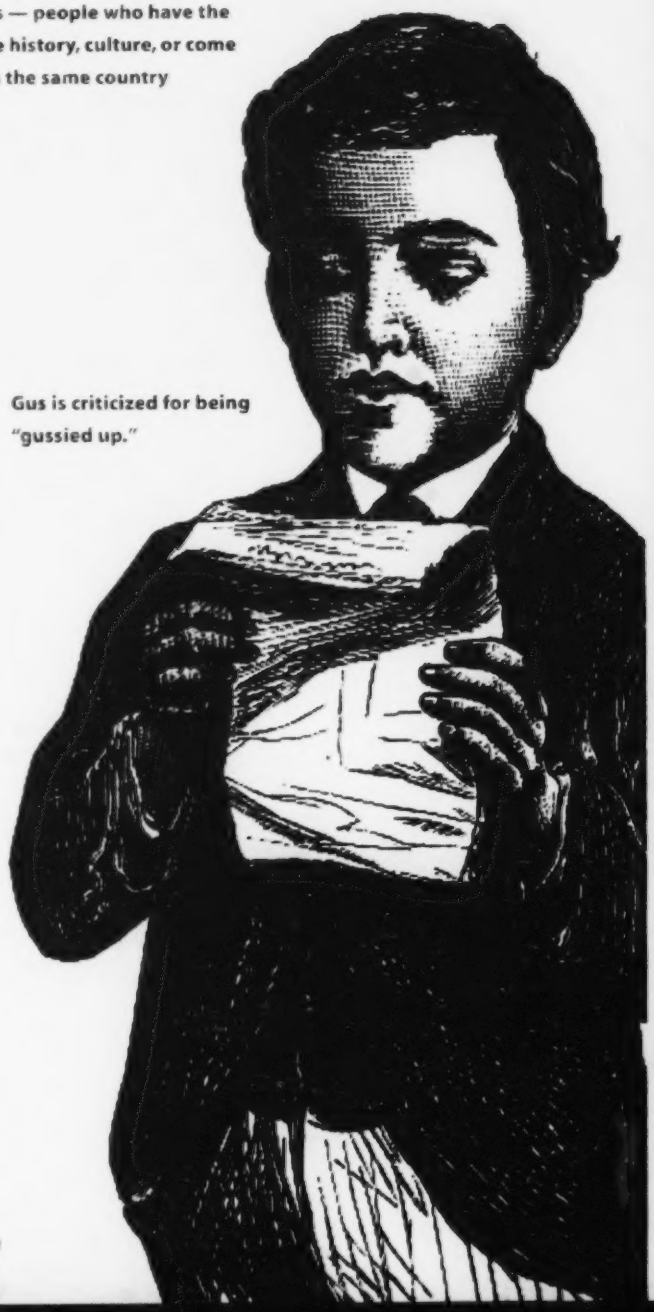
- "Gussied up – a mean way of saying that someone's dressed neatly or in fancy clothes.
- "Half-breed – a nasty name to call someone whose mother and father are of different **races.**

"Besides English, you'll hear me and other characters say some words and phrases in the same language the Indians speak. For example, I repeat the Indian phrase 'En-nen-eh-ko, neh-nah-toe-nee-hah-wah.' In English, this means: 'I sure hope so!'

"Both me and Gus have Indian names in the play. My name is 'Keh-nee-ah-kee-wah,' which means, 'Little Eagle.' Gus's name is 'Wah-pah-ken-nah-wah,' which means, 'White Eagle.'"

rural — from the country

races — people who have the same history, culture, or come from the same country



Gus is criticized for being "gussied up."

After the performance

The Name Game

Why do you think the special names "Little Eagle" and "White Eagle" were given to Caddie and Gus? What special name(s) do your family members or close friends call you?

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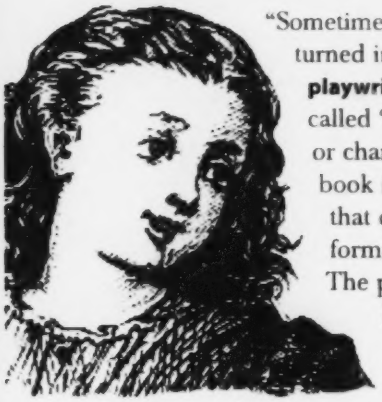
From Book to Play



"Sometimes, books are turned into plays by **playwrights.** This is called 'adapting' – or changing – a book into a play that can be performed on a stage. The play *Caddie Woodlawn* was adapted from the book *Caddie Woodlawn*. In some cases, the play is just like the original book. Other times, the play is different from the original book. Usually when playwrights turn books into plays, they make the stories easier to understand and leave out some of the characters. The play *Caddie Woodlawn* has most of the book's characters and problems, but there are differences.

playwrights — people who write plays.

"In the novel *Caddie Woodlawn*, I have six brothers and sisters, but in the play I only have one – Tom.

"In the novel, my brothers and I almost get hit by lightning and our school almost burns down. That doesn't happen in the play – thank goodness!

"In the novel, my cousin Annabelle Grey comes to visit us all the way from Boston, but she is not in the play. (Lucky for her – we tease her.)"

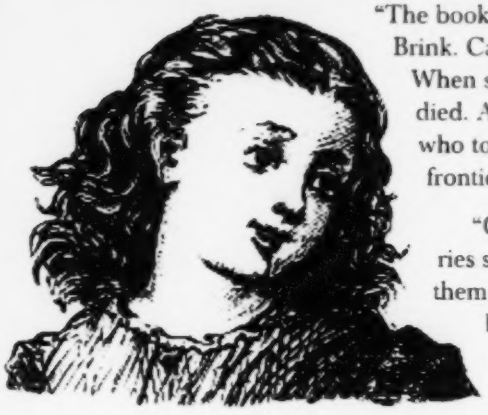
After the performance

It's your play.

Pretend you're a playwright adapting a book. Which of your favorite books would you like to turn into a play? How do you make the story easier to understand? Would you keep all of the book's characters? If you would like, take an event from the book and write a scene.

scene from *Caddie Woodlawn*

Carol Ryrie Brink and the "Real" Caddie



"The book *Caddie Woodlawn* was written by Carol Ryrie Brink. Carol was born in 1895 in Moscow, Idaho. When she was only eight years old, her ma and pa died. After that, she went to live with her grandma, who told her stories about growing up in the frontiers of Wisconsin.

"Carol liked her grandma's stories so much, she decided to write them down and put them all in a book. She used her grandma's name, Caroline Augusta Woodhouse, for the main character but changed the last name to Woodlawn.

"After Carol Ryrie Brink finished the first draft of *Caddie Woodlawn*, she sent it to her grandmother to read. Her grandmother loved the book, and said, 'You never knew my mother and father and my brothers – how could you write about them exactly as they were?'

"'But, Gram,' Carol answered, 'you told me.'

"If you like the play *Caddie Woodlawn*, you may want to read Carol Ryrie Brink's book. You may also want to read Brink's other book, *Magical Melons: More Stories about Caddie Woodlawn.*"

Carol Ryrie Brink as a teenager

Resources

You may want to...

Read about pioneer life in:

Miller, Brandon Marie. *Buffalo Gals: Women in the Old West.* Minneapolis: Lerner, 1995.

Sandler, Martin. *Pioneers.* New York: Harper Collins, 1994.

Read a biography of Carol Ryrie Brink:

Reed, Mary E. *Carol Ryrie Brink.* Western Writers Series, No. 100. Boise, Idaho: Boise State University Press, 1991.

Watch the movie:

Caddie Woodlawn. Wonderworks Series. Churchill Entertainment. Chicago: Public Media Video, 1989.

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CAROL RYRIE BRINK PHOTO BY ELE BRINK, COURTESY OF LATAH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MOSCOW, IDAHO

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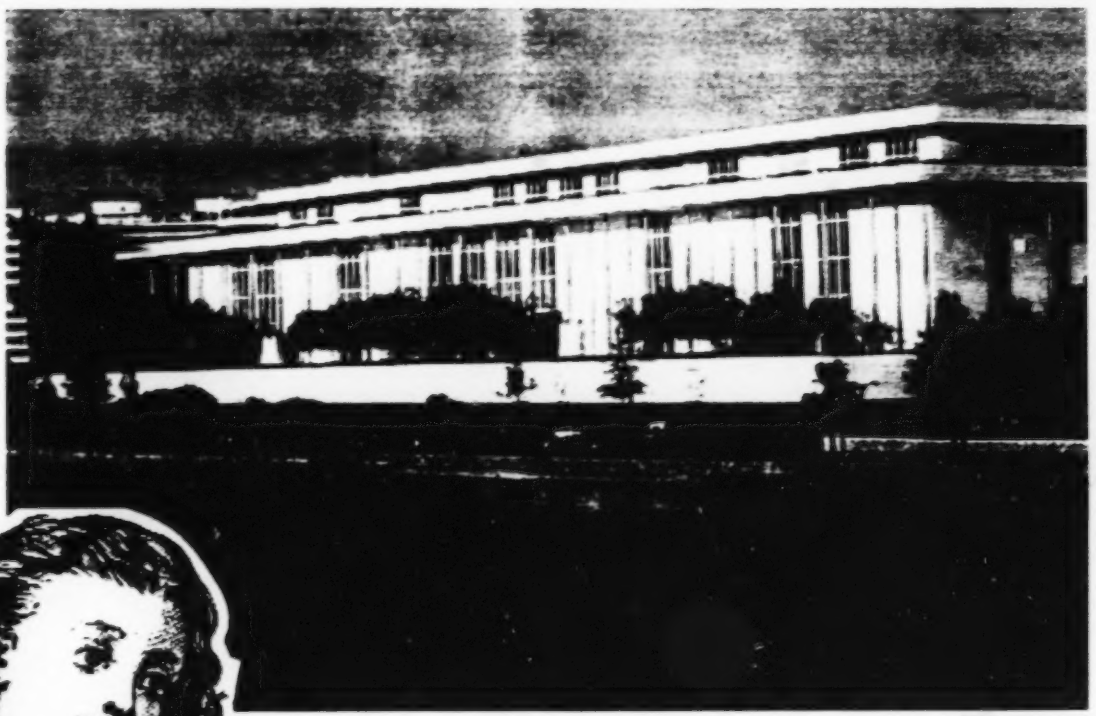
Going to the Kennedy Center



"The Kennedy Center has six theaters! It was named for John F. Kennedy, who was a popular president of the United States.

"You're gonna ride a bus to the Kennedy Center – something I've never done. Back then, we just had horses and wagons. When you get to the Kennedy Center's Hall of States, look up and see the flags from all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the five U.S. territories. Afterwards, you're gonna ride an elevator to the Kennedy Center's top floor to get to the Theater Lab, where *Caddie Woodlawn* will be performed. The Theater Lab is big enough to seat 400 audience members."

You the Audience

"You play a very important role in the performance of *Caddie Woodlawn:* You're the audience! Going to a play is different from watching television or a movie because the actors are right there in front of you. They can see and hear you if you talk during the performance. Acting is hard work, and the performers need to concentrate. Help them by watching and listening carefully – and by responding to what is happening on stage. Clap at the end of the performance if you enjoyed watching me in all of my adventures."

The Kennedy Center

James A. Johnson
Chairman

Lawrence J. Wilker
President

Derek E. Gordon
Vice President, Education

Cuesheet / Caddie Woodlawn

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